

Extracapsular nodal extension and tumor deposits in Head and Neck Squamous Cell Carcinoma

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Abstract

Background Tumor deposits (TD) are considered as Extranodal Extension (ENE) in the AJCC 8th edition of Head and Neck Squamous Cell Carcinoma (HNSCC) TNM staging. **Methods** We analyzed TDs in patients with HNSCC who underwent surgery and adjuvant radiotherapy \pm chemotherapy. Overall Survival (OS) and progression rate were compared to patients with ENE. **Results** ENE was detected in 50 patients, while TDs in 21. Based on the presence of ENE alone or TDs, the mean time to progression was significant ($p < 0.005$). OS at three years was 55.7% for the whole study group, 60.4% in ENE and 38.4% in TDs. OS difference between the N2a-ENE, N3b-ENE, and the TDs \pm ENE group was significant ($p = 0.05$). The hazard ratio between ECs and TDs was Exp (B) 2.296 ($p = 0.027$). **Conclusions** The prognostic implication of TDs represents an independent risk factor, and a separate classification might be required.

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